GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3739
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2005
IIAS
Seth Shri Lakshman Chandra

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the interim reports submitted by D. Bandhopadhayay Committee on Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS) Shimla have since been examined;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations/observations thereof; and

(c) the follow up action taken thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI)

(a): Yes, Sir. Bandyopadhyay Committee enquiring into the affairs of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS), Shimla, has so far submitted the following three interim reports on:-

(i) 'Project on the Study of Indian Civilization' at IIAS

(ii) Probe into sanctioning of Fellowships during the last three years and in particular, the sudden and unusual increase in the number of Fellowships sanctioned'; and

(iii) Probe into Seminars organized/subsidized by the Institute during the last 3 years

(b) The Committee, in its report on the 'Project on the Study of Indian Civilization', noted that the Project is duplication/triplication of efforts and no attempts were made to ascertain originality of the project, even the formulation of project was faulty and it has no plan to execute. The Committee pointed out certain administrative and financial lapses on the part of project authorities, including Director, IIAS, Shimla as administrative Head of the Institute, and arbitrariness of the then Chairperson, IIAS, who was also the Project Director in publication of many scripts without their evaluation and following the procedure to award the job to the printer/publisher. The Committee has recommended for stopping all the expenditure on the project, excluding salary, and withholding publication till the manuscripts are properly submitted and evaluated by experts. It also recommended for reassessment of the desirability and feasibility of the project by the new Governing Body, among others.

The Committee, in its report on the issue of 'Fellowships' stated that there were violation of rules and procedures in the process of awarding of fellowships, observed bias in both the topic of research and selection of the candidates, adequate representation to Muslims, Scheduled Castes/Schedules Tribes was not given and partisanship on the ground of age was also displayed. The extension of fellowship was granted in arbitrary manner. Even, in the award of the prestigious National Fellowship, the rules were flouted. The Committee recommended for strengthening of Academic Committee, revision of the terms and conditions of fellows, ensuring fair distribution of fellowship among scholars of different age groups, suggestion of areas, themes or subjects for research by Fellowship Award Committee, digitization of library and constitution of a Search Committee for the National Fellowships consisting of Chairman, Director and other experts. The recommendations of the Committee are under observation.

In its interim report on the issues relating to the seminars organized/ subsidized by the Institute, the Committee noted that not much thought was given by the academic managers of the institute in last five years to do anything about promoting research on issues relating to national integration, the institute has been pursuing research with single-minded devotion to only one broad area of research, i.e. the theme of a splendor, glory and magnificence of Ancient Indian Civilization. The Institute has not judiciously used the provision under its Memorandum of Association (MoA) for collaborating with other academic institutions for promotion of objectives of IIAS Society. The Committee recommended for preparation of a calendar of academic events for whole year with the approval of Governing Body. Three national seminars, including one on National Integration as mandated in the MoA should be organized at Shimla. The special attention should be given to participation to seminars from far-flung areas and regions of the country. In collaborative events, IIAS should play active roles and not merely act as funding agency. The Committee also recommended for fixation of responsibility for infructuous and wasteful expenditure in funding and sponsoring of non-academic events.

(c): The recommendations made by the Review Committee in its interim report on the 'Project on the Study of Indian Civilization' have been accepted by the Government and sent to the IIAS, Shimla for implementation. The interim reports of the Committee on "Probe

into sanctioning of Fellowships during the last three years and in particular, the sudden and unusual increase in the number of Fellowships sanctioned" and "Probe into Seminars organized / subsidized by the Institute during the last 3 years" are being examined.